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*Subj of Longman*  
*John Ramage*

## Miniature of Washington by John Ramage, 1789.

I have carefully examined the miniature portrait in possession of Mr. Stabler, both from its artistic and historical aspect, and I am of the opinion that it is a portrait of General Washington and was painted by John Ramage.

John Ramage was an Irishman who settled in Boston prior to the Revolution and during the war was loyal to the crown. He was lieutenant of the Royal Irish Volunteers, formed in 1775, for the defense of Boston during the siege and the following year he embarked for Halifax with the British army. Subsequently he went to New York and was commissioned, February 2, 1780, by the British General, Patterson, Lieutenant of Company 7, City Militia. He remained after the British evacuation of that city and soon became the foremost miniature painter of the belles and beaux of the period in New York. He was a Mason, a member of St. John's Lodge, No. 1, of New York, a pew holder in St. George's Chapel and a member of the New York Marine Society, all of which show that he had social as well as professional prominence. He was an accomplished artist, though somewhat artificial, but his miniatures are painted in good taste and were daintily set in gold by his own hand. He became involved in debt and fled to Canada in 1794, where he died October 24, 1802, and was buried in the Protestant Cemetery, in Montreal, now turned into Dufferin Square.

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Washington writes in his Diary, October 3rd, 1789 :—"Sat for Mr. Ramage near two hours to-day, who was drawing a miniature of me for Mrs. Washington."

In "The Century", for April 1889, (p. 864) I wrote :—"All trace of this interesting portrait is unfortunately lost." This note was the means of bringing to light a miniature of Washington, painted by John Ramage, belonging to Mrs. Moses S. Beach, of Peekskill, N. Y., who found it in Montreal in 1884, and purchased it from the daughter of the man in whose house Ramage had died and to whom the artist had given it, as his most valuable possession. This miniature was reproduced in "The Century" for May 1890 (p. 26), and at the time I naturally supposed it to be the one mentioned by Washington in his Diary, and which, for some reason, had not been delivered by the artist. This supposition is now overthrown by the production of the miniature in possession of Mr. Stabler, which he has submitted to me for my opinion.

Mr. Stabler informs me that he knows nothing of the miniature as to when painted or by whom, only that it belonged to his mother, who received it from Otwayanna Carter, wife of Dr. William Owen, of Lynchburg, Va., who died without issue, having adopted Mrs. Stabler as a daughter, she being a niece of Dr. Owen.

Otwayanna Carter was the fifteenth child of Betty Lewis Carter, the only daughter of Betty Washington Lewis, only sister of General Washington. The descent of Otwayanna Carter is an established historical fact, and as her mother was the only daughter of General Washington's only sister, it is most probable that Mrs. Washington, after the General's death, gave the miniature under consideration, as a precious memento, to the daughter of his sister who had died before him.

AVIARY

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*I have no hesitation in asserting this miniature to have been painted by John Ramage, and also to have been set by him, from my familiarity with his work in both branches of art. I have as little doubt that the hair in the back is Washington's, as the cipher "G. W." would indicate.*

The facts and circumstances all point to this being the identical miniature mentioned by Washington in his Diary, Oct. 3rd, 1789, as being painted by Ramage "for Mrs. Washington"; so that instead of the miniature of Washington, by Ramage, being lost, as was supposed in April 1889, there are two undoubtedly original miniatures of Washington, painted from life, by John Ramage, the full-face portrait belonging to Mrs. Beach and the three-quarter-to-left portrait in possession of Mr. Stabler, *which last I have no doubt is the one painted "for Mrs. Washington."*

It may not be without interest to add that in my opinion Mr. Stabler's miniature of Washington, by Ramage, is the original of the portrait engraved in stipple by Houston for Condie's Philadelphia Monthly Magazine for May 1798, and set down in Baker's Engraved Portraits of Washington (p. 80, No. 130,) to Savage.

CHARLES HENRY HART.

PHILADELPHIA, December 1, 1892.

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